United Nations

Framework Convention on Climate Change

FCCC/SBI/2015/8

Distr.: General
29 May 2015

Original: English

Subsidiary Body for Implementation
Forty-second session
Bonn, 1–11 June 2015

Item 6 of the provisional agenda
Matters relating to the least developed countries

Report on the stocktaking meeting on the work of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group

Note by the secretariat*

Summary

This document reports on the stocktaking meeting on the work of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG), held from 9 to 11 March 2015 in Bangkok, Thailand, as mandated by the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth session. Discussions focused on the work of the LEG in supporting the least developed countries (LDCs), and identification of experiences, best practices, lessons learned, and gaps and needs for addressing adaptation in the LDCs, in particular for the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans. This document also includes a list of possible actions for the LEG to undertake in order to further support countries in the full implementation of their national adaptation programmes of action, the other elements of the LDC work programme, and the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans.

* This document was submitted after the due date in order to take into account relevant inputs.

GE.15-10921 (E)

1510921

Please recycle

Contents

		Paragraphs	*Page*
I.	Introduction	1–8	3
	A. Mandate	1–3	3
	B. Proceedings	4–7	3
	C. Objectives	8	3
II.	Summary of the discussions	9–48	4
	A. Progress in supporting the adaptation needs of the least developed countries through the work of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group	9–12	4
	B. Synthesis of experiences of the least developed countries in adaptation planning	13–23	8
	C. Experiences on support provided by relevant organizations to the least developed countries in their adaptation efforts	24–30	10
	D. Key areas of support to the least developed countries: opportunities, gaps and needs	31–48	11
III.	Conclusions	49–50	14

Annexes

I.	Compilation of elements for a future mandate and activities for work programmes of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group in further supporting the least developed countries	15
II.	Questions used to guide the breakout group discussions	20

I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. The mandate of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG), under its current term (2011–2015) is defined in decisions 29/CP.7, 8/CP.13, 5/CP.14, 6/CP.16, 5/CP.17, 12/CP.18 and 3/CP.20. The LEG is mandated to provide technical support and advice to the least developed countries (LDCs) on national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs) and the LDC work programme, and to provide technical guidance and support to the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans (NAPs).

2. The Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth session (COP 16) decided to review, at COP 21, the progress, need for continuation and terms of reference of the LEG and to adopt a decision thereon.[1] It also decided on a set of actions to initiate the review, including a request to the LEG to convene a meeting, including Parties, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and its agencies, and other relevant organizations, with the assistance of the secretariat, in order to take stock of the work of the LEG, before June 2015.

3. COP 16 also requested the secretariat to prepare a report on the stocktaking meeting, for consideration by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation at its forty-second session.

B. Proceedings

4. The stocktaking meeting took place from 9 to 11 March 2015 in Bangkok, Thailand, and preceded the 27th meeting of the LEG held from 12 to 14 March at the same venue. It was organized in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Bangkok.

5. The meeting was opened by United Nations Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya.

6. The meeting was open to Parties, the GEF and its agencies, and other relevant organizations, regional centres and networks. In total 66 participants attended.

7. It was organized in an interactive manner with breakout groups to stimulate discussion and exchange of views.

C. Objectives

8. The overall objective of the meeting was to take stock of the work of the LEG.[2] This was addressed through the following measures:

(a) Assessing progress in supporting the adaptation needs of the LDCs through the work of the LEG;

(b) Sharing key lessons learned and good practices arising from NAPAs and other adaptation efforts in the LDCs and other vulnerable countries;

(c) Providing an opportunity for an exchange of views on the modalities used in the delivery of support to the LDCs;

[1] Decision 6/CP.16, paragraph 9.
[2] Decision 6/CP.16, paragraph 9(a).

(d) Sharing information on experiences and lessons learned in the work of the LEG in collaborating with various partners in implementing its mandates and work programme especially at the regional level;

(e) Exploring emerging gaps and needs in addressing adaptation, building on current and future processes, including on technical aspects of the process to formulate and implement NAPs.

II. Summary of the discussions

A. Progress in supporting the adaptation needs of the least developed countries through the work of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group

9. The LEG has supported and continues to support the LDCs through a variety of modalities. The following are highlights of the support provided over the last five years:

(a) Developing guidelines and technical papers, such as a step-by-step guide for implementing NAPAs[3] and the technical guidelines for the process to formulate and implement NAPs,[4] available in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish;

(b) Establishing thematic working groups and advisory groups composed of LEG members and other relevant stakeholders, including members of other bodies under the Convention (in particular the Adaptation Committee), relevant organizations and representatives of civil society. For example, a NAP technical working group is working on the development of a sample NAP process and on guidance to organizations that are developing supplements to the NAP technical guidelines. Similarly, an advisory group composed of LEG members, a member of the Adaptation Committee and a representative of the LDC group have worked on the revision of the methodologies for collecting best practices and lessons learned in addressing adaptation, while another advisory group is guiding the development of NAP Central (see para. 9(g));

(c) Organizing regional training workshops to build in-country capacity on the objectives, characteristics and content of the NAPAs and NAPs, and how the NAPA and NAP guidelines can be used to support these processes;[5]

(d) Organizing meetings in the LDCs to facilitate direct engagement with and more tailored support to country teams working on the NAPAs and the process to formulate and implement NAPs;

(e) Providing databases on adaptation such as the NAPA priorities database, which presents the list of ranked priority adaptation activities and projects, and the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF)/NAPA projects database, which provides updated information on the status of implementation of NAPA projects under the LDCF;[6]

(f) Compiling case studies on adaptation such as the country profiles on best practices and lessons learned;[7]

[3] <http://unfccc.int/essential_background/library/items/3599.php?such=j&symbol=FCCC/GEN/250%20E#beg>.
[4] <http://unfccc.int/7279>.
[5] <http://unfccc.int/6989>.
[6] <http://unfccc.int/6996>.
[7] <http://unfccc.int/6491>.

(g) Developing NAP Central, a universally accessible, web-based central repository and hub for information pertinent to the process to formulate and implement NAPs;[8]

(h) Publishing outreach products that provide information on adaptation in the LDCs, such as the publications on best practices and lessons learned for addressing adaptation in the LDCs (volumes 1 and 2), available in English, French and Portuguese;[9]

(i) Regularly organizing side events in the margins of the intergovernmental process as part of the outreach activities of the LEG;

(j) Engaging with other United Nations processes, including through collaboration with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), and involvement in the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA);[10]

(k) Developing lists of frequently asked questions about the LDCs, the LEG, NAPAs, and the process to formulate and implement NAPs;

(l) Collaborating with other bodies under the Convention such as the Adaptation Committee;

(m) Collaborating with the GEF and its agencies, including by inviting them to participate in workshops and meetings;

(n) Collaborating also with other stakeholders on various themes, for example on consideration of gender issues;

(o) Promoting South–South cooperation by offering forums, including virtual forums, for the LDCs from different regions – along with non-LDC developing countries – to meet, learn from one another, and share their experiences, best practices and lessons learned in addressing adaptation.

10. Key outcomes and products delivered by the LEG under its current mandate (2011–2015) were also reviewed, including:

(a) The LEG has thus far organized five regional training workshops on NAPAs, the LDC work programme and NAPs, and has trained a total of 247 participants from the LDCs, including some focal points of the Convention on Biological Diversity and several developing countries that are not LDCs, with a view to fostering South–South cooperation and exchange of experiences.[11] Before the end of its current mandate in December 2015, the LEG has planned to organize three additional regional training workshops;

(b) The LEG has produced the following publications and outreach products, available in three languages (English, French and Portuguese):

(i) Technical guidelines for the national adaptation plan process (also available in Spanish on demand);[12]

(ii) The national adaptation plan process – a brief overview;[13]

[8] <unfccc.int/nap>.

[9] <http://unfccc.int/6110>.

[10] The IPoA sets out the international community's vision and strategy for the sustainable development of LDCs for the decade 2011–2020 (see <http://unohrlls.org/about-ldcs/istanbul-programme-of-action>).

[11] In the LEG regional training workshops where developing countries that are not LDCs are also invited, the LEG invites three participants per LDC and one participant per developing country in the region that is not an LDC.

[12] <http://unfccc.int/6110>.

(iii) The NAP posters: table of steps, building blocks and sample outputs under each of the four elements of the NAP process;[14]

(iv) The NAP CD-ROM;[15]

(v) Best practices and lessons learned in addressing adaptation in the LDCs, volume 2;

(vi) Best practices and lessons learned in addressing adaptation in the LDCs through the NAPA, volume 1;

(c) The LEG has engaged with the NAP global support programme for the LDCs, as well as that for the non-LDC developing countries. The LEG is part of the advisory board of the support programmes, and actively engages these programmes when conducting the regional training workshops on NAPs;

(d) The LEG is also part of the advisory board of a global programme which aims to build capacity for the LDCs to participate effectively in intergovernmental climate change processes. This programme was launched in the margins of the stocktaking meeting, on 11 March 2015, in Bangkok;

(e) In addition, the LEG has collaborated with a total of 14 United Nations organizations/programmes;[16] 7 other multilateral organizations, including development banks;[17] 4 development/bilateral agencies;[18] 12 research institutes and other organizations;[19] 11 regional organizations;[20] 2 non-governmental organizations (NGOs)/civil society representatives;[21] and 3 private sector/consulting firms;[22]

---

[13] <http://unfccc.int/6110>.

[14] <unfccc.int/7279>.

[15] <unfccc.int/7279>.

[16] Convention on Biological Diversity; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); International Fund for Agricultural Development; UNDP; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA); United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); United Nations Human Settlement Programme; United Nations Institute for Training and Research; United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR); UN-OHRLLS; United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER); UN-Women; World Health Organization (WHO); and World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

[17] African Development Bank; Asian Development Bank; CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS); Global Change System for Analysis, Research and Training (START); Green Climate Fund (GCF); GEF; and World Bank.

[18] Australian Agency for International Development; Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ); Japan International Cooperation Agency; United States Agency for International Development.

[19] Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization; Conservation International; Global Climate Forum; Global Programme of Research on Climate Change Vulnerability, Impacts and Adaptation (PROVIA); Griffith University; International Centre for Climate Change and Development; International Institute for Environment and Development; International Research Institute for Climate and Society; International Union for Conservation of Nature; Michigan State University; University of the South Pacific; and World Resources Institute (WRI).

[20] African Climate Policy Centre managed by UNECA; Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA); East Africa Community Secretariat; International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development; Mekong River Commission; Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development based in Rwanda; Secretariat of the Pacific Community; South Pacific Regional Environment Programme Secretariat; Southern African Development Community (SADC); specialized agency of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel; and Zambezi River Authority.

[21] Association des Femmes Peules Autochtones du Tchad (AFPAT) and Care International.

[22] aWhere; Global Climate Adaptation Partnership; and Stratus Consulting.

(f) The LEG has organized three NAP Expos;

(g) The LEG has launched NAP Central. NAP Central continues to be developed and contains elements such as guidelines for the process to formulate and implement NAPs; information resources on various adaptation elements, organized by hazard and sector; country portals and country profiles; navigators to data, tools and adaptation case studies; collaborative sites; and pages for various events (meetings and workshops). NAP Central will also be used by Parties in order to share their NAP documents with others.

11. In implementing its mandates, the LEG has mobilized a wide range of organizations to support the implementation of its work programme. Examples of the LEG mobilization efforts are provided below:

(a) Prior to each of the regional training workshops, the LEG engages a wide range of organizations, including the GEF and its agencies, regional centres and networks, international organizations, bilateral and multilateral agencies, NGOs and representatives of civil society, and individual experts, paying particular attention to those organizations with specific activities in each LDC region. The LEG also pays particular attention to addressing considerations of gender and vulnerable communities, and ensures participation of relevant organizations in those areas in each of the workshops;[23]

(b) In response to a request from the COP,[24] in October 2012, the LEG convened a review meeting to enable experts and representatives of agencies to provide feedback to the LEG on the draft NAP technical guidelines. In addition to Parties and the GEF and its agencies, experts from several organizations were invited to the meeting and provided substantive inputs;[25]

(c) LEG members participate in the work of a number of bodies and programmes under the Convention:

(i) The LEG serves on the Adaptation Committee's task force on NAPs;

(ii) The LEG continues to take part, upon invitation, in events of the Technology Executive Committee related to adaptation technologies;

(iii) In accordance with the LEG terms of reference,[26] to ensure linkages between the LEG and the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE) on adaptation issues, at least one member of the LEG from an LDC and one from a Party included in Annex II to the Convention are also members of the CGE;

(iv) In 2014, two members of the LEG served in the interim Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts, in accordance with decision 2/CP.19, paragraph 4, and one of these members served as co-chair of the Committee.

12. The LEG has also been invited to participate in meetings of various agencies and organizations, where the results of the work of the LEG are presented and opportunities to

[23] For example at its last training workshop on NAPs for eastern and southern African LDCs, which was held from 23 to 27 February 2015 in Livingstone, Zambia, the LEG mobilized the following organizations: the NAP Global Support Programme spearheaded by UNDP and UNEP; CCAFS; COMESA; FAO; GEF; GIZ; Global Water Partnership; SADC; START; WHO; WMO; and the Zambezi River Authority.

[24] Decision 5/CP.17, paragraph 16.

[25] Representatives of the following organizations attended the review meeting: AFPAT; GIZ; Global Climate Forum; International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD); Michigan State University; PROVIA; UNISDR; UN-SPIDER; WHO; and WRI.

[26] Decision 29/CP.7, annex.

raise awareness about NAPAs and NAPs are provided. For example, the LEG collaborated with UN-OHRLLS to organize a special event on past, current and future mechanisms to support the LDCs in reducing their vulnerability to climate change. The event took place during the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries held in May 2011 in Istanbul, Turkey. Other examples include the active participation of the LEG in workshops and meetings organized by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the NAP global support programme for the LDCs, and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations which has been developing supplements to the NAP technical guidelines on agriculture in general and on the integration of genetic diversity.

B. Synthesis of experiences of the least developed countries in adaptation planning

1. Presentations by countries

13. Participants representing four countries made presentations to frame discussions at the meeting, including: the Gambia, on experiences and key lessons learned from NAPAs; the Sudan, on moving from NAPAs to NAPs; Tuvalu, on its experience with a regional approach to adaptation planning; and Belize, on adaptation planning in the Caribbean. In addition, Bangladesh, China, the Comoros, Ethiopia, Grenada, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mali and Togo also provided specific insights from their countries' experiences in addressing adaptation. Representatives of UNDP, the GEF and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) also made presentations.

14. The participant from the Gambia explained that in the Gambia they began to realize that the true cost of adaptation exceeded what they had initially estimated in their NAPA. He also mentioned that it has been challenging to access the technical information required for the most vulnerable adaptation end users (e.g. grass-roots communities and farmers). He asserted that a means of communication had to be designed to get the necessary information (e.g. meteorological information and forecasts) tailored to users. While the Gambia had reached its funding ceiling under the LDCF, the participant was of the view that the country cap was a positive thing, providing everyone with equitable access to this Fund. He indicated that one of the most positive outcomes from the NAPA process in the Gambia had been the enhanced understanding of adaptation in the country.

15. According to the participant from Sudan, that country's experience had demonstrated that the NAPA experience and outcomes were a good basis on which to build for NAP preparation. What is needed to develop the process to formulate and implement NAPs includes: technical and institutional capacity-building and support to states (here subnational governments) and a NAP network that connects all states; improving knowledge, information and understanding of current and future vulnerabilities to climate risks (e.g. climate scenarios and impact modelling); integration of adaptation into policies and development planning at all levels, including through the identification of entry points in the national planning cycle; building a monitoring and evaluation system; development of robust project proposals for priority adaptation options for states; and fundraising for the process to formulate and implement NAPs, targeting government, climate-focused funds, and other multilateral and bilateral funding sources.

16. The participant from Tuvalu indicated that in December 2014, a National Advisory Council on Climate Change and a climate change unit were established. The latter will take a leading role in the process to formulate and implement NAPs in Tuvalu. The participant also highlighted some of the gaps and needs which should be addressed in order to support long-term adaptation planning in Tuvalu, including: relevant climatological, sociological and economic data, especially sector-specific data (e.g. for agriculture and fisheries); the

capacity to analyse data and translate climate models into addressing local needs; monitoring and evaluation frameworks for adaptation planning; thorough documenting of local studies and research; and financial and technical support.

17. The participant from Belize, gave a presentation on regional approaches in the Caribbean, channelled through the work of the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre. He noted that the Centre, which was established in 2009, is mandated to coordinate the regional response to climate change and mentioned its efforts to manage and adapt to projected climate change impacts. He further indicated that the strategic direction for the Caribbean's response to climate change risks is articulated in the Regional Framework for Achieving Development Resilient to Climate Change, which was approved by the Head of State of the Caribbean Community in 2012. In the same year, the Implementation Plan for the Regional Framework, which defines the regional strategy for coping with climate change over the period 2012–2022 was also approved by the Caribbean Community. The Implementation Plan focuses on supporting Caribbean Community governments, ministries, departments and agencies, in integrating climate change in national development planning and finance.

18. Other participants shared the experiences of their countries. The participant from Bangladesh noted that in that country's effort to integrate adaptation in development planning, Bangladesh is focusing on the national level, in particular through domestic resources, as it was recognized that donor programmes were not necessarily focused on national needs. China's representative noted that it has developed a national climate change adaptation strategy, which includes the formulation of plans for adaptation actions, addressing the needs of key sectors, regions and local areas. China is also actively promoting South–South cooperation and has increased its financial support to developing countries for addressing climate change. The participant form the Comoros state that with funding support from the European Union, the Comoros is in the process of integrating climate change adaptation into its national plans and is developing a pilot action plan for resilience for vulnerable communities. The Comoros has made progress in the process to formulate and implement NAPs and has developed a road map for its NAPs. Ethiopia's representative stated that it is conducting a series of institutional interactions to raise awareness and influence the design of policies. The participant from Grenada indicated that it is identifying gaps and needs to be addressed for effective adaptation planning. Grenada has also conducted technically comprehensive training for public officials on adaptation tools. Lesotho's representative noted that the country's Ministry of Development Planning is working on integrating climate change into all government planning processes. The participant from Madagascar stated that in 2011 in that country, the National Policy on Climate Change was established and in 2014, efforts to integrate climate change into the State General Policy[27] were initiated. Climate change budget codes are part of the country's national budget and many sectors and NGOs are represented in the National Committee for climate change. While the participant from Mali indicated that that country has established a climate change fund in order to support the implementation of the measures identified in the country's climate change action plan.

2. General discussions and lessons learned

19. During the discussions, several participants shared the conclusion that it is important to invest in building national capacity. If external consultants were to be hired, provisions for local retention of capacity, data, continuity and research, as well as capacity development of local staff, should be essential features of the contracts. Also noted was the need to strengthen national institutions, to support institutional capacity-building and encourage the development (or strengthening) of national implementing institutions, rather

[27] This policy highlights the Government of Madagascar's policy priorities.

than only using multilateral implementing entities. The importance of capacity-building on the ground, at local levels, was also emphasized. To ensure this can happen a well-functioning local government unit which can provide adaptation support on the ground is required.

20. The experience of preparing and implementing NAPAs has reinforced the need to invest in and build on traditional culture and knowledge, which should be harnessed and, in some cases, scaled up, before seeking foreign technology or knowledge.

21. Experience has taught many participants that it is best to enhance the way in which local knowledge and lessons learned are documented, for the benefit of all stakeholders. In communicating climate change information, there is a need to find the right balance between information that is easy to understand but not overly simplistic. Good practices include translating information materials into local dialects, and having technical experts, policymakers and communities working together to find the best translation of climate terminology into local languages.

22. Participants described the positive role that NAPAs have played in lending credibility to the Convention by connecting it with communities on the ground, through concrete action. Participants also mentioned that there was a need to shift from pilot projects towards large-scale, transformative adaptation programmes. Some pointed out that one of the most important outcomes to emerge from the NAPA process was the establishment of institutions for adaptation and for building the national adaptation planning process.

23. Participants indicated that the LEG has reached out to all LDCs, providing a close connection between the Convention and the countries.

C. Experiences on support provided by relevant organizations to the least developed countries in their adaptation efforts

24. Three organizations made framing presentations on the first day of the meeting:

(a) UNDP, on its experiences in supporting countries in integrating climate change adaptation in development;

(b) The GEF, on experiences in supporting the LDCs through the LDCF;

(c) The GCF on future support for NAPs and the GCF process.

25. According to UNDP, countries have established building blocks for integrating climate change into more comprehensive medium- and long-term planning at the national, sectoral and subnational levels, with attention being paid to local specificity, while simultaneously working on the reduction of poverty and the achievement of inclusion. The representative of UNDP gave several examples, including: the involvement of Kenya's Ministry of Planning in its national climate change strategy; the tracking of public fund allocation to climate-related activities in Nepal's development sector, through the use of a budget code; Ghana and Lesotho's wireless text system for sharing disaster-related information; and Thailand's programme to build capacity for the cost–benefit analysis of adaptation options in the medium- and long-term.

26. The UNDP representative argued that there was no single model for integrating adaptation with development and national planning. As adaptation is so context-specific, he observed that it was important to establish channels for two-phase feedback from the national and subnational levels; to focus on dialogue and the inclusion of multiple stakeholders; and to establish institutional structures and coordinating mechanisms, in order

to ensure sustained approaches to, inter alia, medium- and long-term planning and budgeting.

27. In his presentation, the UNDP representative also highlighted the importance of the subnational level as an entry point for adaptation interventions, in particular to identify vulnerabilities and prioritize adaptation options. He also explained how, building on this foundation, countries need support in order to develop comprehensive approaches to climate risk management that involve the whole government.

28. The GEF representative provided an overview of the LDCF resources allocated to NAPAs, NAPs and the LDC work programme. Since the establishment of the LDCF in 2001,[28] it has capitalized to USD 1.3 billion in total. Many NAPA projects are still under implementation. Most countries had tapped into the LDCF and some had exhausted their equitable access allocation; near-term demand for LDCF resources exceeds funds that the GEF had available to disburse under the LDCF, as of 11 March 2015. The GEF representative indicated that the near-term funding shortfall might lead to loss of momentum in advancing NAPAs and NAPs. There were 18 LDCF projects seeking USD 138 million at the time of the meeting.[29]

29. Several participants voiced their concerns about the lack of funds in the LDCF for current and future adaptation planning and implementation. Suggestions included that the chairs of the LDC group and the LEG attend GEF Council meetings to provide relevant information to donors. One participant mentioned that they had raised the issue of the lack of LDCF funds in the last Adaptation Fund meeting. The GEF representative also indicated that as the GEF moves forward, it is particularly important that the LDCF clarifies the added value of its adaptation programme vis-à-vis other funds and mechanisms.

30. A representative of the GCF Secretariat provided an update on the current state of play in the GCF. He indicated that the GCF had mobilized USD 10.2 billion by COP 20, and expected over 50 per cent to be converted to contribution arrangements by April/May 2015. He also indicated that the GCF expects to accredit the first group of entities by March 2015 and have the first project proposals approved by the GCF Board at the end of 2015. Under its readiness programme, at least 50 per cent of available funding is to be allocated to readiness activities in vulnerable countries. At the time of the meeting, 75 per cent of readiness requests came from the LDCs, small island developing States and African States. The GCF representative further mentioned that it was in the GCF mandate to help developing countries to strengthen plans, including NAPAs and NAPs.

D. Key areas of support to the least developed countries: opportunities, gaps and needs

1. Financial support

31. In discussions on existing gaps and needs, participants indicated that countries faced a complex landscape when embarking on the process to formulate and implement NAPs, including more stakeholders, projects and unknowns with respect to support for implementation. Funding and access to funding for implementation were key to establishing successful and dynamic NAP processes, effective stakeholder engagement and integration into development.

32. Participants agreed that in the short term (from now until 2020), the priority should be on the replenishment of the LDCF to fund all NAPAs and to support enabling activities associated with the formulation of NAPs. Existing guidance to the LDCF covers the

[28] Decision 7/CP.7.

[29] A list of the projects is given in the report of the LEG, contained in document FCCC/2015/SBI/7.

implementation of NAPAs and activities to enable the formulation and implementation of NAPs. There is a need for the COP to consider funding arrangements for the implementation of NAPs.

33. Participants requested an exploration of how the LEG could help the LDCs to access funding, in the form of the provision of tools and guidance to countries, and coordination with funding mechanisms. Some participants had tried to access or had accessed funding for adaptation from other sources, such as the Adaptation Fund, while others highlighted the difficulty for the LDCs in competing with countries that could devote much more time and resources to securing funding.

2. Scientific and technical support

34. Participants discussed the importance for adaptation practitioners in countries to be able to interpret information provided by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and to facilitate this, the national meteorological services need to move from being data collection agencies to information providers. They felt that capacity-building support was needed for those practitioners to make this functional shift.

35. Participants also recognized that the LDCs would need to be supported in identifying the best climate change scenarios to select based on the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. In addition, they would need support in order to understand what the 2 °C global goal means for their countries, including the impact on major sectors of the economy and on vulnerable communities.

3. Integration of adaptation into national planning

36. Establishing institutional structures and coordination for climate change adaptation is still a challenge. In future, environment ministries would need to integrate with national planning and development bodies and strategies. Boosting technical capacities of national institutions to plan, budget, and track and monitor climate finance is equally important. Establishing processes and monitoring and evaluation systems to track finance is important.

37. Discussion on this topic saw participants agreeing that greater coordination was needed among different government departments (including those that address other development priorities such as education and health) and economic sectors, with respect to climate change activities. It was also essential to support and strengthen state institutions for adaptation and for them to provide institutional support to NAPs.

38. Participants raised the problem of continuity in situations where a new leadership and/or administration takes over. They also highlighted that issues need to be framed in a way that resonates with economic development and finance so to guide investment choices. There are competing demands for limited resources and trade-offs are required based on some kind of metric. The breakout group requested guidance on sectoral involvement and integration, particularly in the banking, insurance and legal sectors. On the question of cross-ministerial involvement, the participant from World Meteorological Organization suggested considering how parliaments, which act across ministries, could be engaged to coordinate activities.

39. Participants discussed a gap between NAPA implementation and advancing the process to formulate and implement NAPs. Some participants spoke of the difficulty for vulnerable countries to address longer-term adaptation when their urgent and immediate needs are not yet addressed. Others proposed that the process to formulate and implement NAPs could also gradually start addressing urgent and immediate needs. It was found that early warning systems were, for example, an area where NAPAs and NAPs intersected. Participants recognized that, while short-term planning tends to be reactive and long-term planning tends to be adaptive, there should not be any discontinuity between the two,

instead a seamless approach should be pursued, with short-term planning mainstreamed into longer-term plans.

4. Regional approaches

40. In their discussions, participants highlighted that adaptation needs and programmes are relevant at multiple levels, from the local, subnational and sectoral, to the national and regional. They discussed the following rationale for adopting a regional approach to complement efforts to address national adaptation priorities:

(a) Opportunities for South–South cooperation, especially in cases where LDCs are neighbours to developing countries that are not LDCs;

(b) Potential for learning from one another, including through sharing of data, information and knowledge;

(c) Creation of synergies for implementing adaptation measures.

41. While the process to formulate and implement NAPs largely covers the local to the national levels, the regional level presents another area of focus for adaptation efforts, especially for consideration of transboundary water, energy and ecosystem issues, and infrastructure development issues that service and/or impact several countries. The regional level is also valuable for providing adaptation responses that can benefit multiple countries in a region, for example, early warning systems for storms, droughts and floods, which require cooperation and joint efforts.

42. Regional approaches can also recognize unique vulnerabilities and priorities for a region, leading to framework programmes that are unique to that region, such as the joint national action plans on climate change adaptation and disaster risk management for the Pacific, water and energy issues in the Hindu Kush Himalayan region, and blue economy issues for countries with extensive coastal areas.

43. Regional centres were seen as instrumental in facilitating regional cooperation based on policies, programmes and assessments, and for managing capacity-building provision that is tailored to regional circumstances.

44. A participant, supported by others, acknowledged that linking regional objectives for adaptation to the national level during planning and implementation is made easier when the regional approach or cooperation takes place under the umbrella of a regional treaty or agreements, or through recognized regional integrated communities.

5. Synergy and looking at the future

45. Participants expressed the need for the LEG to work closely with UN-OHRLLS to ensure that countries that are graduating from the LDC group continue to receive the support dedicated to the LDCs, during a transitional period, including for addressing adaptation.

46. They also discussed the need to strengthen linkages between adaptation efforts under the Convention and other processes, in particular IPoA, for the LDCs. IPoA acknowledges that securing equitable, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth and development in the LDCs requires building their resilience to withstand crises and emerging challenges, including the impacts of climate change.

6. Addressing emerging areas of support through the least developed countries work programme

47. The LDC work programme, as established under decision 5/CP.7, contains the following elements:

(a) Strengthening existing and, where needed, establishing, national climate change secretariats and/or focal points to enable the effective implementation of the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol in the LDCs;

(b) Providing training, on an ongoing basis, in negotiation skills and language, where needed, to develop the capacity of negotiators from the least developed countries to participate effectively in the climate change process;

(c) Supporting the preparation of NAPAs;

(d) Promoting public awareness programmes to ensure the dissemination of information on climate change issues;

(e) Developing and transferring technology, particularly adaptation technology (in accordance with decision 4/CP.7);

(f) Strengthening the capacity of meteorological and hydrological services to collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate weather and climate information to support the implementation of NAPAs.

48. It was noted that while the elements of the LDC work programme overlap with some of the areas of support identified in paragraphs 31–46, in its current state, the LDC work programme could not cover all areas. Those that are not covered include:

(a) Supporting the process to formulate and implement NAPs, including the integration of climate change adaptation into national planning;

(b) Strengthening linkages between science and climate policy in the LDCs;

(c) Fostering adaptation planning and implementation at the regional level;

(d) Fostering synergy with other processes outside the Convention, in particular IPoA.

III. Conclusions

49. There was a general consensus among participants at the stocktaking meeting that the work of the LEG in its 14 years of existence had been valuable and relevant to the LDCs, but also, in recent times, to non-LDC developing countries embarking on the process to formulate and implement NAPs. Participants acknowledged that the LEG had communicated a wealth of information in order to support the LDCs in the implementation of the LDC work programme, the preparation of NAPAs in particular, and in the process to formulate and implement NAPs. They recognized that the LEG had conducted its work through various modalities and mobilized a range of organizations and experts in support of its work.

50. Nonetheless, with the LDCs completing the implementation of their NAPAs and progressing in the process to formulate and implement NAPs, new gaps and needs in addressing adaptation are emerging. With these in mind, as well as emerging and envisaged challenges, participants discussed potential new elements for the LDC work programme and areas in which the work programme of the LEG could be expanded to support the LDCs in the best and most relevant way in the future (see annex I).

Annex I

Compilation of elements for a future mandate and activities for work programmes of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group in further supporting the least developed countries

Participants discussed in breakout groups how the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) could address some of the gaps and needs identified both during the stocktaking meeting and in the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans (NAPs). The suggestions made in each breakout group were aggregated, and presented and reviewed during a plenary session. The revised list, emanating from this process is presented below.

1. **Overall technical guidance and support**

- Provide technical guidance and support for the process to formulate and implement NAPs, including facilitating the sharing of experiences among the least developed countries (LDCs) and developing countries that are not LDCs, on accessing financial support, building relevant capacities, and undertaking technical work (e.g. vulnerability and adaptation assessments, alignment with development priorities and pathways, monitoring and evaluation);
- Provide guidance on how to best build on existing and ongoing programmes in the process to formulate and implement NAPs, especially programmes such as the national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs);
- Continue to provide guidance on the implementation of NAPAs;
- Continue to provide guidance on specific issues faced by countries, upon request;
- Promote communication on gaps and needs, and relevant technical guidance through NAP Central;[30]
- Engage those organizations working on supplementary materials to the NAP guidelines, in order to address coherence and integration issues;
- In cases where the capacity, training, information and technical needs of the LDCs extend beyond the remit and capacity of the LEG to meet these needs, the LEG should actively seek to collaborate with relevant organizations or institutions in order to facilitate the provision of the requested support. In addition, the LEG could refer the LDCs to relevant organizations or experts.

2. **Integration of adaptation in national planning**

- Provide guidance and advice on how countries can undertake assessments and how to best integrate sectoral approaches in national integrated approaches;
- Build capacity for undertaking various assessments using relevant methodologies and approaches;
- Develop guidelines for monitoring and evaluating adaptation outputs and outcomes in countries, building on the NAP technical guidelines.

3. **Technical support and advice on accessing funding**

Overall

- Provide guidance and advice to countries particularly on accessing various sources of funding;

[30] See <unfccc.int/nap>.

- Provide inputs to the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism (the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund (GCF)) and to the Standing Committee on Finance, to facilitate access of the LDCs to financial resources;
- Advise countries on ways to scale up and link their adaptation activities to broader development issues and to relevant programmes;
- Advise country teams on the development of implementation strategies for adaptation in the LDCs, including through the development of programmes, in order to ensure the integration and sustainability of efforts over the medium- to the long-term;
- Conduct an inventory of existing and potential funds for adaptation, specifically other multilateral and bilateral sources that are potentially relevant to supporting the needs of the LDCs. The results of the inventory work should be presented so as to facilitate a better understanding of the ways in which to access listed sources of funding.

Facilitating access of the least developed countries to the Green Climate Fund

- Engage with the GCF (and its support system) and collaborate with it on capacity-building in the LDCs through its readiness programme, including the development of guidelines on how the LDCs can better access resources for adaptation under the GCF, for the formulation and implementation of NAPs and strategic frameworks for adaptation;
- Attend the board meeting of the GCF to provide inputs on the needs of the LDCs.

The Least Developed Countries Fund

- Continue to provide advice and guidance to the LDCs in accessing the Least Developed Countries Fund;
- Regularly attend the Fund Council meetings to provide inputs on the needs of the LDCs;
- Collaborate with the Global Environment Facility and its agencies on the provision of support to the LDCs according to mandates and guidance from the Conference of the Parties on the Fund.

4. Scientific knowledge and technical support in reducing vulnerability and building resilience

Framing adaptation in development

- Establish or strengthen collaboration with relevant technical organizations and institutions so as to provide support and technical advice to the LDCs on the different approaches to framing the development–adaptation issues within the NAP process;
- Collaborate with donor agencies and organizations, working on designing better programmes for addressing development planning at the national level that include adaptation and improving targeting, in order to facilitate the visioning of future development over the medium- to long-term to formulate and implement NAPs in the LDCs;
- Organize training workshops to provide guidance on the use of climate predictions for short-term adaptation activities and the use of climate projections and Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) assessment reports for long-term adaptation activities, with relevant organizations and experts;
- Organize other thematic technical workshops, in collaboration with relevant organizations.

Data and knowledge management issues

- Establish or strengthen collaboration with relevant technical organizations and institutions to:
  - Provide technical support and advice on data issues, in collaboration with existing national and international data archiving centres, including on data rescue, data mining, data management and integration in order to support the NAP process over long time horizons;
  - Provide advice to countries on how to develop appropriate data policies targeting adaptation projects, data sharing across national entities, etc.;
  - Develop information resources on examples of adaptation needs that can best be addressed through approaches on adaptation;
- Establish how NAP Central could have a role in the management of data and other data-related issues.

Preparatory elements: climate data and scenarios

- Provide technical guidance and support, in collaboration with relevant technical groups and centres, to support training on climate data analysis as part of training on the NAP process;
- Promote synergy with efforts under the Global Framework for Climate Services to ensure that needs under the NAP process are taken into account in terms of data collection, analysis and production of climate information services within countries;
- Mobilize the IPCC Task Group on Data and Scenario Support for Impacts and Climate Analysis, the Global Climate Observing System Secretariat and other relevant organizations and programmes, to develop climate change scenarios at the regional and national levels, based on the 2 °C global goal, for use in assessments under NAPs;
- Provide technical support and advice on climate change scenario development, including through the mobilization of relevant organizations to provide technical support and advice to the LDCs on the application of climate change scenarios during the formulation and implementation of NAPs, based on the best available approaches of the IPCC.

Preparatory elements: impacts, risk, vulnerability and adaptation assessment

- Provide technical support and advice on the assessment of risk, vulnerability and impacts using the global temperature rise scenarios, in the formulation and implementation of NAPs;
- Provide guidance and training on the tools available for vulnerability assessment, and capacity-building needed to apply these tools, and share these resources via NAP Central;
- Collaborate with other relevant organizations to mobilize support for undertaking vulnerability and adaptation assessments in the LDCs;
- Explore further operationalization of gender mainstreaming;
- Collaborate with relevant technical organizations and institutions to develop and produce resource materials on technical aspects of issues to be undertaken, including vulnerability and adaptation assessment and monitoring and evaluation;
- Provide guidance and advice to LDCs particularly on conducting risk assessments in order to identify climate-related barriers to development.

5. Regional approaches

- Collaborate with regional centres in supporting the LDCs, and their unique regional perspectives, in the process to formulate and implement NAPs, including on

regional and transboundary and cross-cutting issues, unique vulnerabilities and regional programmes;

- Collaborate with regional centres and networks and relevant organizations to explore ways and means by which to address the challenges and barriers faced by countries, particularly the LDCs, with respect to regional synergy and on ways to build capacity at the national and subnational levels;
- Promote the sharing of experiences, best practices and lessons learned in adaptation planning and implementation at the regional level, including through the following: pursuing case studies and demonstrations on aspects of the process to formulate and implement NAPs; supporting training and capacity-building on the process; ensuring that regional capacities are utilized and regional priorities are addressed effectively; and supporting joint efforts in addressing adaptation between the LDCs and developing countries that are not LDCs;
- Catalyse adaptation planning and implementation at the regional level;
- Serve in an advisory capacity to the LDCs on ways to engage with regional centres and networks and organizations in the process to formulate and implement NAPs and facilitate the communication of the capacity gaps and needs of the LDCs in the process to formulate and implement NAPs to the appropriate regional entities;
- Support the LDCs in identifying opportunities and benefits (including social and economic) for regional approaches to adaptation, and deliver outreach and awareness-raising activities to countries on the potential challenges and barriers to regional approaches, and on ways to address them;
- Provide technical guidance and support to the LDCs on how to link regional objectives for adaptation to the national level during planning and implementation.

6. Monitoring and evaluation

- Provide technical guidance and support for monitoring and evaluation of national adaptation planning and implementation, including through collaborating with relevant organizations and experts;
- Fill in the information gaps on monitoring and evaluation and provide relevant training and capacity-building, including through the capture of experiences of monitoring and evaluation outside the LEG and NAPA processes;
- Develop resource materials on the monitoring and evaluation of the process, and on monitoring and evaluation of adaptation.

7. Synergy and looking at the future

- Promote synergy with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, Istanbul Programme of Action and more generally, support the alignment of adaptation efforts with the Sustainable Development Goals through enhanced collaboration with United Nations headquarters;
- Support access to adaptation technologies in the LDCs, in particular through identifying and assessing technologies that can have large impacts on vulnerable areas and sectors, and enhancing collaboration with entities of the Technology Mechanism;
- Enhance collaboration with other bodies under the Convention to promote synergies and avoid duplication;
- Integrate considerations of gender and vulnerable groups in adaptation planning and implementation;
- Support countries in the formulation and submission of intended nationally determined contributions related to adaptation, in particular in their alignment with the process to formulate and implement NAPs;
- Provide inputs to the adaptation discussions of the post-2015 agreement, including:

- The implication of the global goal on adaptation;
- The translation of specific actions on adaptation in the LDCs beyond 2015;
- The consideration of loss and damage either as a stand-alone issue or under adaptation;

- Contribute to mobilizing the private sector for the process to formulate and implement NAPs.

Annex II

[English only]

Questions used to guide the breakout group discussions

1. Financial support

- What are key experiences and benefits of the Least Developed Countries Fund for the least developed countries (LDCs)? List the main conclusions and refer to the role of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group where appropriate.
- What are key needs for financial support for adaptation for the LDCs? Be specific and concise in articulating the needs.
- What are opportunities for addressing these financial support needs?
- The Least Developed Countries Fund was created to support urgent and immediate needs through projects designed to address priorities identified in national adaptation programmes of action. Addressing medium- to long-term adaptation needs through the national adaptation plan (NAP) process will require an integrated, holistic and programmatic approach. How will technical and financing needs evolve?
- What are opportunities presented by the Green Climate Fund in addressing adaptation needs in vulnerable countries through the NAP process?

2. Scientific and technical support

- What are needs and opportunities for enhancing development and application of scenarios (climate change as well as socioeconomic and development pathways)?
- What are questions that must be addressed when applying the 2 °C or less global goal, such as timing of such an increase, and what that translates to at the regional to national levels?
- What are major international programmes that can be mobilized to improve climate services and support the process to formulate and implement NAPs in the LDCs?
- How is it best to address data issues that would support adaptation planning spanning short- to medium- and long-term planning and implementation?
- What are some of the technical issues that must be considered in the process to formulate and implement NAPs? (E.g. how to integrate sectoral approaches into a national plan that is well linked to national development? How to ensure coherence among supplementary materials to the NAP guidelines?)

3. Integration of adaptation in national planning

- What are important issues/topics when addressing issues of integration?
- What should be the short-, medium- to long-term goals for integration of adaptation in development planning?
- What are key examples and results of efforts to integrate climate change in national planning (e.g. climate change budget codes; institutional arrangements and policies, and legislation on climate change)?
- The size of countries matter in terms of how to design plans and their implementation, what are examples of approaches spanning a range of sizes?
- How is it best to build on existing programmes and activities?

4. Regional approaches

There are several cases for regional approaches, including regional planning (e.g. when addressing transboundary issues on water, conservation, infrastructure, corridors, energy

pools, etc.); regional collaboration on national planning (e.g. common assessment methods and data generation to support national processes); regional cooperation (e.g. South–South cooperation); etc. In the opposite direction, plans can also be developed at the local level (e.g. local adaptation plans of action).

- Elaborate on examples and cases for regional approaches for adaptation, and explore their benefits and opportunities.
- Are there adaptation needs in the LDCs and neighbouring countries that can best be addressed using the regional approach, or even the global approach?
- What opportunities exist for joint programming between the LDCs and non-LDCs?
- How can regional cooperation help to address capacity gaps and needs?